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SOME RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN WORK IN JAPAN

*By Rev. Charles M. Warren, for twelve years a missionary of
the American Board in Japan*

The great visible result of the Christian work which for fifty-two years has been carried on in Japan is the churches. Of these, however, another is to speak. The task of this paper is to call your attention to some other results of Christian work as a whole, irrespective of creed or race.

Japan has been a missionary country since the second entry of the Roman Catholic missionaries, and the first arrival of the Protestant missionaries. The country has been open to foreign residence since 1859. She still is a missionary country as may be seen from the fact that there are now about eight hundred foreign Christian workers, men and women, still at work there. And lastly, a very interesting fact, Japan desires to be considered for years to come a missionary country. In this I do not, of course, ignore the fact that there are Christian Japanese who consider it patriotic to urge that all the Christian work should be done by the Japanese themselves. But of these the number is gradually diminishing as it dawns upon them that it is rather a narrow selfish provincialism than a disinterested patriotism that causes this. On the other hand, there are three facts that lead us to believe that Japan desires missionaries. First of all, the missions of all denominations are requesting new missionaries from their home boards. Some missions are even requesting a doubling of their forces. This, of course reflects foreign judgment, but it shows, what for our purpose is the main thing, that the missionaries feel that the relations between themselves and the Japanese churches which are influenced by, and in turn influence the international feeling—that these relations are such that they can conscientiously, not to say enthusiastically, invite others to come to enter into these relations. Secondly, the individ-

ual churches desire more missionaries as is evidenced by the frequent requests which these churches are making that a missionary be located in their little town to work with them. They prefer, of course, an experienced missionary and frequently name their choice; but if they can not get a man already on the field they gladly welcome the newcomer from America. Again, the Japanese leaders in the churches are asking that new missionaries be sent out. To one familiar with the situation twelve of fifteen years ago, the revolutionary character of this position will be obvious. Then they did not desire this and this anti-missionary feeling was given expression to in word and deed. But now they have outgrown that feeling, experience having proved that in the continuance of the missionaries there is no danger to the independent status of the churches. In this connection it is interesting to note that the recent pro-missionary movement was launched by a Japanese pastor of Tokyo, who, having visited this country, went home so imbued with the idea and spirit of the brotherhood of man that he made this the basis of his action in appearing by request at the annual meeting of one of the missions and pleading for more missionaries. The statements on this last point are probably most accurately descriptive of the situation in the Congregational churches in Japan. But they are, though to a lesser degree probably, indicative of the general attitude of the Japanese churches on the missionary question.

In the above and in what follows, the missionary is differentiated from the Japanese Christian workers because our purposes in a paper at this conference necessitate our looking at the missionary not in his capacity as a Christian worker but as a foreigner. This is of course contrary to our desires and contrary to our method of procedure in Japan where the missionaries take such great joy in the solidarity of the work and in the unity of the workers, foreign and Japanese.

All this preliminary discussion of the missionary is introductory to, and explanatory of, the first point that I wish to make: namely, that the missionary has been a factor

in bringing about whatever of good feeling now exists between the *peoples* of Japan and the United States. The word *peoples* is used in contradistinction to *governments*. In this country the theory that the people are the ultimate rulers is pretty nearly substantiated by the facts. In Japan, constitutional in government though she may be, and a legislative parliament though she may have, yet the real government is not yet by the people.

The platform of this conference magnifies the truth that mutual understanding is of great importance in the establishment and maintenance of pleasant relations between peoples. What has the missionary been able to contribute towards this mutual understanding between Japan and the United States?

The first relations of the Japanese with Americans were diplomatic, which means that they were of governments. It must be an unceasing source of gratification to Americans that the first American ambassadors, who had in charge the work of establishing relations with the Japanese were men of the type of Matthew C. Perry and Townsend Harris. From the time of the sending of these men to Japan, as well as of the Iwakura embassy to the United States and Europe in 1871, the Japanese date their friendship for us. We do not mean that at that time the Japanese looked upon Commodore Perry as anything but a powerful barbarian to whose superior might they were compelled for the time to bow. Later and calmer judgment, however, has convinced them that not only do they owe a debt of gratitude to the United States for having compelled them to open their doors, but that they should also be grateful that it was Commodore Perry who did it in his tactful though firm way instead of a representative of a European nation. For, at that time at least, European nations were not in the habit of dealing with Asiatic peoples gently and tactfully.

So much for the diplomatic contact. After this the next force making for this great end was the missionary. The statement of four facts will serve to show the possibility of the missionary's helping in this matter:

First, the large majority of Protestant missionaries now,

about three-fourths in fact, are Americans. Second, the Christian schools have been largely carried on by the American missionaries. And third, the American missionaries encouraged by spoken word and financial aid the going of young Japanese men and women to America for purposes of study. No statistics are available but personal experience leads me to believe that nine Japanese young men and women are educated in America to one in Europe. Thus we see the especial possibilities for influencing Japanese, especially young, impressionable Japanese. These missionaries love their native land, absence only making it the more dear. They come also to love their adopted home, Japan. With these peculiar feelings towards the two countries the conditions for setting forth to the Japanese the good points of America are ideal; and the reasons being obvious and cogent, no opportunity is lost. And many and many a Japanese, from prime-minister and university professor down, is glad to tell how his warm regard for the United States began in his esteem of the missionary representative of America.

An excellent illustration of this point is seen in the address given by Professor Fujisawa of the Imperial University of Tokyo before the Jubilee Christian Conference held in Tokyo two years ago. The title of the address was "The Influence of Missionaries upon the Education and Civilization of Japan." Now a professor of an imperial university in Japan is considered to be in a certain sense a public official. So that it meant a certain amount of official recognition of Christianity for him to appear at the Conference at all. Among other things he mentioned a list of notable men of title who had expressed their appreciation of what missionaries had done not only for the country, but also for themselves personally. He also cited the fact that Prince Iwakura, whose mission to America and Europe has already been referred to, upon leaving America sent an official letter of thanks for what Dr. Ferris had done to help Japanese students in America. His comment upon this is as follows: "It seems to me that this letter of thanks for what Dr. Ferris had done to help Japanese students in

America is the voice of the nation." This Dr. Ferris was secretary of one of the mission boards.

In all the above I have been going upon the assumption that the Japanese people have towards the Americans a real warm friendly feeling. This assumption is the result of my few years of experience among the people. And I have been unable to find another missionary who does not share this feeling.

And not only in Japan but also upon his return to this country the missionary is in a position to reiterate his belief in the feelings and intentions of the Japanese towards the United States, and in some small way endeavor to replace by the truth as he sees it what seems to him to be the tissue of falsehood which has been woven by some Americans, whether sincerely or with unworthy motives.

The name that spontaneously arises to our lips as we hear this program of missionary activity is that of John H. DeForest, statesman-missionary. Probably no man among the whole missionary body in recent years has done more than he along the line we are considering. Of long experience with the people, having an oratorical vocabulary and style in Japanese attained by very few foreigners, he accomplished so much in his own field of labor, Sendai, that his name became known and the demand for his talents nation-wide in Japan. He addressed huge gatherings of Japanese students and officials in the interests of international peace, until at last he became almost missionary-at-large for the Empire. But while he was able to do so much among the Japanese in unfolding American customs and ideals, perhaps an even greater work awaited him upon his return to this country on furlough. All through his career he had been an expositor of Japanese character and ideals to the American people as correspondent of the Independent and other periodicals. While he was at home on furlough a few years ago the opportunity for platform work in the interests of international peace was thrust upon him and so conspicuous was his success that he was made Japan vice-president of the American Peace Society, and his printed addresses circulated as a part of their recognized peace propaganda.

Upon his return to Japan he was decorated by the emperor for his conspicuous services in the cultivation of good feeling between Japan and the United States. That this recognition of those services was sincere and shared by the people is shown by the great public reception given him upon his arrival at Sendai and by the immense assembly which attended his funeral last spring. It is shown by the exceptional treatment accorded him when he visited Manchuria in war time; and again when he visited Korea at about the time of its annexation. The Japanese officials realized that in him they had a friend to whom they might entrust the truth that he might interpret it to the American people. Dr. DeForest is the most conspicuous example of what is being done today, though on a humbler scale, by practically every one of the five hundred missionaries in Japan. And this is only the active and open, as it were the official side of the missionary's work along these lines. In addition there is the daily word of personal conversation or that spoken from the pulpit or the teacher's chair.

The fact that this conference *is* proves your belief in the efficacy of a good understanding between nations in the maintenance of right relationships between nations. In dealing with thought and feeling, especially the thought and feeling of a whole nation, it is practically impossible to furnish proofs. I have simply suggested for your consideration a few points upon which may be based an estimate of the usefulness of the missionary in this regard.

From the standpoint of the mission boards of fifty years ago this would have been regarded as a by-product. But the enlightened leadership of our boards today is proud to claim this as a direct result of the sending of missionaries. And if it is contributing one iota towards peaceful relations between Japan and the United States it may well be considered a not unimportant part of the work of missions.

A second result to which I would call your attention, though very briefly, is the work of the Christian institutions. In this portion of the paper the missionary and the Christian Japanese work is considered as one, for we are considering now some results of fifty-two years of *Christian* work not

of missionary work. Some of these institutions, then, you are to understand are carried on by the missions, some are almost entirely the work of the Japanese Christians, and some are the product of a combination of the two forces. This paper takes it for granted that you are acquainted with the splendid work which the Y. M. C. A. is doing all over Japan and therefore simply mentions this at the head of the list of institutions. These institutions are of nearly all the kinds with which we are familiar in this country.

The Japanese are themselves amply able to do their own medical work. As medical missions, then, play at present only a small part in Japan missionary work we are not surprised to find few hospitals and dispensaries on our list. There are *some*, however, and at the very beginning of Christian work this was a very important feature.

The most conspicuous and valuable of these Christian institutions are the schools. Nearly every mission has some schools connected with it of kindergarten and of high-school grade for boys and girls. The oldest, largest and most celebrated of these schools is the Doshisha University, which has had a history of thirty-five years and owns a finely situated plant in Kyōto. Next to the schools perhaps the orphanages are the most important. The most conspicuous of all these is the Okayama Orphanage. The founder of this, Mr. Ishii, professedly following the example of George Müller of Bristol, built up, with the help and counsel of the foreign missionary, an institution in which at one time twelve hundred children were cared for, entirely on a faith basis. Of the institutions of secondary importance we may notice rescue homes for women, homes for ex-prisoners, homes for old people, a factory girls' home, settlement work, day-nurseries and creches.

Such in outline are some of the institutions that express the philanthropic side of Christianity. But perhaps Christianity's best work has been in awakening the public interest, and in inspiring the public enthusiasm, in philanthropic institutions. The Y. M. C. A., to take a concrete case, soon proved to be meeting a deeply felt need. Before many years there was organized in competition a Y. M.-B.-A., a

Young Men's Buddhist Association. Buddhist workers for young men were compelled in self-defence to organize along similar lines. Again, the success of the Christians with their orphanages was the cause of the springing up of a host of imitators. If imitation be the height of flattery, the Christians feel flattered indeed when very frequently in imitation of their own methods there appears at their doors a subscription paper for a Buddhist orphanage three or four hundred miles away!

I also have a good authority behind me in saying that although the instructional form of service was not unknown at the Buddhist temples before, yet since Christianity's advent the sermon is much more common in the Buddhist temple than it used to be. One of the most authoritative recent publications on Japan is Count Okuma's *Fifty Years of New Japan*, which is a collection of monographs on various subjects by men whom Count Okuma esteemed to be the best qualified available men on that particular subject. The writer of the chapter on Buddhism is J. Takakusu, Doctor of Letters in Japan, and M.A. and Ph.D. from foreign universities, professor in the Imperial University at Tokyo. Let me quote: "The methods and attitudes taken by the Christians in their missionary work gave the Buddhists new incentives for the improvement of their organization, doctrines and philanthropic work." And again: "Another evidence of Christian influence upon Buddhism is shown in the establishment of sectarian schools of various kinds, and especially in an eagerness to start schools for girls and women—a point to which hitherto small attention has been paid." Thus does this fair-minded Buddhist authority, writing for Japanese readers, speak of the influence of Christianity upon Buddhism.

The lives also of the missionary and of the Christian pastor have proved in many cases a revelation; and the people are demanding in their Buddhist teachers a moral life. In self-defence, too, the tone of the non-Christian teaching has been raised. Christian preaching often results in more earnest living up to the light they have. For instance, a friend who has a very effective stereopticon talk

on the "Prodigal Son" tells me that as the non-Christians who come, attracted by the free entertainment, are leaving, they frequently remark to each other: "That's right. We ought to go to the temples more and be better men."

Now, the foregoing is simply evidence on my third point, which is the change in ideals due to Christianity. Ideals have been elevated. The instances adduced above are in the more visible realm. But the influence of Christianity towards the elevation of ideals in more intangible and spiritual ways is just as real, though harder to demonstrate. Ideals have been elevated. One needs only to go back fifty-two years to compare the condition of things then and now to see the truth of this. To enumerate some of these; there have been changes in the ideals concerning woman, personal morality, business morality, family life, and lastly, the value of man. Some, at least, of these changes in ideals were brought about in part by the flood of new ideas on all subjects that has been released in Japan during these fifty years. These changes are the resultant of a combination of forces at work, some will say. Very well. They were so caused and some of them might have come about without any help from Christian life and teachings as such. Take for instance the change that has come about—or at least is coming, slowly—in the ideals of business morality. As I return to America and meet people, I find that there is hardly any idea that has a wider acceptance with regard to the Japanese than the one which compares the commercial integrity of the Japanese with that of the Chinese greatly to the detriment of the Japanese. Now personally I believe there are two sides to that question; but without doubt there has been in the past a deplorable deficiency in Japanese business circles in their ideals of commercial honor. The beginnings of this are to be traced to the fact that in the old feudal régime the merchant was the lowest of the classes of citizens. He was expected to cheat—and he, of course, did not disappoint those expectations. That was considered not a trick of the trade, but rather a legitimate method in trading. Now these merchants are the ones who are most in contact with the

commercial classes of foreigners, and their ideas with regard to what is legitimate in business have necessarily been modified by that contact. They found that if they wanted to do business advantageously with the European merchant they would be compelled to conform more nearly to the European standards of business morality. Baron Shibusawa, Japan's greatest man of business, heading the deputation of business men to this country two years ago, was shocked at the bad name the Japanese merchant has among us; and seeing the basis of truth in the charges, upon his return to Japan strenuously urged in the widely read trade-journals the acceptance of a new code. It may be possible in this case that purely upon the honesty-is-the-best-policy principle this would have been changed in any case.

In the above I do not mean to imply that the Japanese merchants have already arrived. I believe there is still room for improvement. But anyone at all acquainted with the facts will admit this change for the better in ideals along this line.

From the above it will be seen that I am very ready to ascribe to other causes whatever of credit I can see that they deserve in bringing about this change of ideals. But allowing amply for all these other sources, the change in ideals, especially with regard to the highest matters, or if you prefer, the most spiritual matters, has only come about through Christian influence. Let us consider the ideal as to the value of the individual human being. In this I don't mean merely in the ancient sense of a soul to be saved into heaven. I mean the value of the whole man, body, mind and soul. Let us briefly note some of the changes in ideals concerning man that have come about in these fifty years. Fifty years ago, to begin with a stock illustration, the warrior with a new sword could order any member of an inferior class to kneel down in order that he might test the new sword in making a clean cut in taking his head from his shoulders. Not that this was done very often. But it could be done and actually was done. Compare with this the present law upon the statute books which says, "Thou shalt not kill," and says it equally to the prime

minister and to the common citizen. Ah, but you are overturning your own argument, it will be said. These laws are based upon the Code Napoleon and bear no relation to the work of Christians in Japan. As far as that goes the Code Napoleon is based on the Mosaic laws which Christianity claims as its foundation and background; so that the result is the same whether the law was copied from the Paris law books of the Sinaitic. Of course I do not claim any peculiar credit for Christianity as such in the Japanese legal code. But, permit me to ask, whence comes the public opinion that lies behind those laws? For no one who knows the Japanese can for an instant think that if the police force of the country were withdrawn Japan would become an anarchistic aggregation of savages. The laws are enforced in large measure by public sentiment as well as by police force, though this public sentiment may not yet be so enlightened as that of countries which emerged from their feudal age three hundred instead of fifty years ago. Whence, I repeat, comes this public opinion? And again, how is it in some cases that public sentiment actually surpasses the laws? New laws of a high moral purpose are from time to time added to statute book or city ordinance. Of such a nature is the recent closing of the most flagrant of the five prostitute quarters in the great city of Osaka. After the conflagration of two years ago, by the circulation of petitions the authorities were forced to refuse the rebuilding of one section of the city for that purpose. And the leaders in the movement were Christians. The work certainly would never have been done were it not for the Y. M. C. A. and the churches of Osaka. And unless Christianity had been quietly at work for years sending forth its high ideal of womanhood and of personal morality the tens of thousands of non-Christians who signed that petition never would have done so. Without this new ideal of civic and personal righteousness among the masses in that great city it would have been impossible for this great cleansing to have been forced upon the city.

But to return to the ideals concerning man's value. Fifty years ago there *might* be someone to kill the body; there

certainly were few to aid, or cure, or care for that body. The hospitals, the lazarettos, the institutions for the orphan, the blind, the deaf and dumb have all been built since then.

And the ideals as to the method of conducting the already existing institutions have changed for the better. In one case we have absolute knowledge as to how this came about. An American medical missionary came to know conditions in the prisons of Japan and with an introduction from the American minister to Okubo, the minister for home affairs, he enlisted that statesman's interest. Prison doors throughout the empire were opened to him and his investigation was made the basis of a report to Minister Okubo himself. At that time the Japanese idea of the function of prisons was the punitive one with the added idea that if they were made otherwise than places of punishment they would be crowded by people glad of even such asylum. The report sent in to Minister Okubo stood squarely upon the modern humanitarian idea that the criminal is incarcerated for the protection of society, not to cause him to suffer for his crime. And in the report stress was laid upon the efficacy of Christianity itself as a corrective in the prison as in the nation. This book was placed as a text-book in the hands of persons responsible for prisons in the Empire and the results in a very few years were astonishing. This one book had changed in a remarkable degree the ideals of legal and penal circles as to the value of man. That the Japanese consider the above to be the facts in the case and that they hold in honor the man who did it is shown by the fact that the story is narrated in Count Okuma's book already referred to. Count Okuma's book remarks: "In conclusion there is one thing we must not forget for a moment, namely, the important part played by Christianity in these reforms," and then continues with the story as told above. And again when last year there was a prison congress in Washington, D. C., the Japanese representative told the story. When he learned that the man to whom his country felt such a debt of gratitude was still alive he expressed great surprise and gratification and made a special journey in order to visit that ex-medical missionary and

convey to him the official thanks of his government. The man who did this was a Christian gentleman serving as a Christian missionary and definitely endeavoring in every way that presented itself to spread Christian ideas. He accomplished his reform by means of a book that stood squarely upon Christian principles, and which definitely taught Christian principles and ideas. This conference being held at Worcester it is eminently fitting to state that the man who was responsible for prison reform in Japan is your honored townsman, Dr. J. C. Berry.

Fifty years ago if one were of the wealthy or warrior class he might obtain a very limited education. Today education is compulsory, with 36,000 schools of all grades and sorts in the empire. Such is the change in the ideal of man's value from the intellectual standpoint.

Fifty years ago where were the 92 rescue homes for women, the 100 orphan asylums, the 74 reformatories, the 37 homes for ex-prisoners and all the other institutions indicative of the present desire for the moral and spiritual welfare of the people?

This is only the merest suggestion of the different ideals now and fifty years ago concerning the physical, intellectual, and spiritual welfare of man. The difference is there: whence comes it? The axiom that water cannot rise higher than its source has only a limited degree of truth when transferred to the spiritual realm. Spiritual truth is to be likened to a developing plant rather than to running water. But in one sense as it is true that water cannot rise higher than its source, so it is true that reform cannot rise beyond the ideals of the reformers. These ideals are rapidly approaching the Christian. To what other source than the Christianity in Japan can they be traced? They were not brought from Europe and America by the Japanese themselves; for it is an interesting phenomenon that when the Japanese Christians come to America they are frequently shocked at the wickedness and worldliness of this self-styled Christian country. They were not obtained through diplomacy. Unfortunately the golden rule is not yet working between nations. The men from Europe and America who form

the commercial classes in the ports of Japan are certainly not responsible for inculcating any high principles of spirituality. For though, as we have seen, they might help in the development of a *commercial* morality, the high ideals concerning woman, for instance, are not traceable to the influence of the morality of the ports of Japan. If Christianity is not to be credited with these phenomena—if, as my subject puts it, this is not one result of fifty years of Christianity in Japan, then are we at a loss as to its cause.

I have endeavored to show that there is among the fifty millions of Japanese citizens an increasingly enlightened body of ideals along these various lines. We are not to consider this as a fixed thing, nor as up to the grade of some other countries. But it is growing and growing rapidly. While the general civilization, itself the result of Christianity in other countries, which Japan has absorbed, has undoubtedly played an important part in bringing this about, yet to some extent it is the direct product of the influence of Christian teaching and Christian lives. So deeply do I feel this that I believe that if there were not a single Japanese Christian or a single church building in Japan today—if, in other words, there were absolutely no visible or tangible result of these fifty-two years of Christian work—yet in view of this change of ideals alone every cent of money expended and every minute of time spent in the Christian propaganda would be well worth while.